



176th Wing • Alaska Air National Guard

eGuardian

November 2, 2020

COVID-19 UPDATES

As a reminder, the 176th Medical Group continues to ask the following screening questions prior to building entry:

- Have you had any mild respiratory issues, cold, or any other symptoms of COVID-19?
- Have you traveled out of state or internationally within the past 14 days?
- Have you recently been instructed to quarantine or isolate?
- Have you had contact with anyone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19?

If your answer is **YES** to any of the question or you have an exception to policy to work and need services at the 176th MDG, please contact Maj. Kendalin Farthing in advance at kendalin.farthing@us.af.mil. We can address your situation and the best way to provide care and mitigate risk/spread of COVID to help ensure your health and that of the staff.

November 2020 Quarterly Drill

HRE/POSH TRAINING *DECEMBER 6*

The 176th Wing Equal Opportunity Program will be hosting a virtual HRE (Human Relations Education) / POSH (Prevention of Sexual Harassment) class Sunday at 10 a.m. Unit training managers will register students in ArcNet and provide a TEAMS link to students. This training is required for all members every four years.

Commander's Corner

WHAT IS A MIDNIGHT SUN GUARDIAN

Editorial by Col. Anthony Stratton
176th Wing commander

A member of the wing recently asked me, "Why do we need to commit resources to our wing identity?"

There are two answers: First, we need an organizational identity that ensures behavioral expectations are well defined and communicated.

Second, every Airman in the 176th Wing needs to know what our core missions are, how the tactical work they do everyday matters, and what they can expect from the organization in return.

What is identity? The dictionary defines it as "condition or character as to who a person or what a thing is; the qualities, beliefs, etc., that distinguish or identify a person or a thing." The key words in this definition are "distinguish" and "identify."

When the 176th Wing was at Kulis Air National Guard Base, our identity was defined more clearly by the separation, from both private sector aviation and the regular Air Force, our geography provided. We had 144 acres solely for our units and our missions. All a visitor had to do was look at the massive lettering on Hangar One, and they had no doubt they were in 176th Wing and Alaska Air National Guard territory.

The exclusive location enabled us to define how we implemented the missions, conducted our drills, and socialized. We were not a tenant, but an owner with sole discretion in nearly every aspect of utilization and access.

The compact physical space ensured organizational connection across the wing and intimate awareness of its core missions. It also ensured expectations were rapidly communicated and implemented.

The 2011 Base Realignment and Closure move marked the end of 50 years of stability, absorbing the wing into the thousands of acres, and multitude of mission sets, that comprise JBER. Where we once walked from one organization to another, we now had 20- and 30-minute vehicle commutes.

Our youngest Airman became so physically separated from our core missions sets that some couldn't even identify what they were. Our unimpeded discretion as an owner was replaced with the policy and coordination required of a tenant now required to explain the critical nature of our mission to active duty leaders who changed every 24 months.

All this was just BRAC; from 2011-2019, the wing divested the C-130, welcomed the HC-130J, and flipped the C-17 association.

Now that the dust has settled, it is time for us to solidify the 176th Wing's organizational identity. What distinguishes us and how do we, as members, identify with our unit? What does the unit expect from us and what can we expect from it? To do this we must intentionally and deliberately dedicate the resources to define who and what we are and are not.

It is critical that each piece — vision and mission statements, commander's intent, motto, name, and symbols — are all collectively congruent. That they reinforce, over the several hundred acres we now inhabit, the core missions of the wing and the vital role each of us fulfills. That when someone sees, or hears, our symbols, or motto, they know who we are and the impact we deliver.

IT IS LITERALLY A DARKER TIME FOR ALASKA: A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH (AND OUR CHIEF OF AERONAUTICAL MEDICINE)

Editorial by Diann Richardson
176th Wing director of Psychological Health

I wanted to write to the 176th Wing members and families as we come to a close of the year that was 2020. I certainly do not need to reiterate the difficulties, stresses, fears and concerns that has been this COVID pandemic.

It has been both a collective experience and a unique experience for each one of us. I believe in a large part the 176th Wing has been incredibly resilient, but "thriving in a vice of uncertainty" for such a long time is difficult.

However, my new concern right now for Alaskans, is the decreasing daylight. Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD), in a nutshell, occurs in the winter when some people experience depressive symptoms (a little less than 10 percent of Alaskans) due to the lack of vitamin D production from the sunlight.

More melatonin (brain produces in response to darkness—helps with sleep) is secreted and less serotonin is produced, which are some of our happy (and needed) hormones. Vitamin D deficiencies are a reality in the Great North, and SAD's symptoms include a change in mood, fatigue, sleep changes, withdrawal from others, aches/pains, increased appetite and weight gain.

Typically, the holiday season distracts most of us from the diminished daylight with the various parties, festivities, travel, traditions, gifts and gathering. But that is not the case this year as we are physically distancing ourselves from others.

Here are some ways to do better if you are concerned about SAD for you or a loved one. Have your Vitamin D level checked by a doctor. I personally, never had problems with SAD and did all the recommended things to thrive in the winter.

However, after about eight years of living in Alaska, the darkness really started getting to me, and I learned that my Vitamin D levels were extremely low. So, I

now take prescription strength Vitamin D once a week, have my doctor monitor my blood work annually, still get outside often regardless of the weather, and am doing well.

I am not a medical doctor and defer those specifics to Lt. Col. Elizabeth Lafleur – these are her words:

“The Alaska DHSS Epidemiology recently studied Vitamin D deficiency and found that Alaskans generally have multiple risk factors for vitamin D deficiency. As a result, it is recommended that most Alaskans should get 600 to 800 IUs (International Units) of Vitamin D daily through a combination of supplements AND diet.

“This can be through foods such as fatty fish like salmon, liver, eggs and fortified foods like milk. Vitamin D supplements are inexpensive, available over-the-counter and don’t need to be fancy; just make sure it has a label showing it’s third-party certified for safety and quality (USP, NSF, or ConsumerLab, for example). However, because you can get too much Vitamin D, testing your levels can help guide your provider to prescribe the correct dose to maximize your health, especially if you need more than the over-the-counter dose. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions.”

More info:

For Warfighter Nutrition guide, supplement safety:

<https://www.hprc-online.org/nutrition/warfighter-nutrition-guide#chapter-12>

For Vitamin D information for patients:

<https://www.uptodate.com/contents/vitamin-d-deficiency-beyond-the-basics>

Alaska DHSS, Vit D in Alaska:

<http://dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Epi/eph/Pages/VitaminD.aspx>

Lt. Col. Elizabeth Lafleur, ANG, MC, SFS – chief, Aerospace Medicine, 211th Rescue Squadron, 176 Medical Group
MDG Phone (907) 551-7662
Email elizabeth.lafleur.1@us.af.mil

Regular exercise (especially aerobic), good sleep hygiene, spending time outdoors, eating a well-balanced/healthy diet (yes, there is a scientific reason you crave carbohydrates in the winter), utilizing a dawn simulator (an alarm clock that emits light to wake you)--all can be beneficial as well to beat the “winter blues.” I also recommend utilizing ways to naturally increase the “feel good” chemicals in your body as identified in this graphic:

<https://images.squarespace-cdn.com/content/5e7c900ec113b95d20c880b8/1597167624161-JPF0ADTB7DO0B4NFLD7Q/Happiness+Chemicals+%26+How+To+Hack+Them.jpg?content-type=image%2Fjpeg>

Another way to mitigate SAD is to utilize light therapy or “happy lights.” These lights emit 10,000 LUX spectrum of light, which mimic natural sunlight IF used effectively. AND, our senior leadership has given a “green light” for me to purchase many happy lights to distribute to units and service members (THANK YOU)!! Just contact me for details and I can give you a short tutorial how to utilize the device for optimum results.

If all suggestions for treating SAD still do not improve symptoms, short term counseling may be warranted. Research suggests that utilizing cognitive behavior therapy is effective at treating SAD and most counselors are trained in that modality. In a few cases, psychotropic medication may be advised to increase serotonin levels, but that course of treatment is a discussion between the patient and medical provider.

If you overlay increased COVID constraints, living in a sustained pandemic, and potentially dealing with Seasonal Affective Disorder, it could create a recipe for feeling very depressed. If someone’s body is not producing the chemicals needed for one to feel happier, plus positive coping has not sustained over time, external help may be needed. Please do not hesitate to contact me for more information about anything addressed or any other mental health topic.

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Work cell phone (during business hours)—(907) 306-9941

Follow Bolt, 176 Wing’s Therapy Dog, on Instagram @bolt_thetherapydog

EVENTS / OPPORTUNITIES

KJEC IS RECRUITING

The Kulis Junior Enlisted Council is looking for new board members.

Do you have or know of a high-performing Airmen and would like to expand their horizons and step into a role of higher leadership at the Wing level?

Please submit their names by using our Sharepoint survey:

https://usaf.dps.mil/sites/12468/Lists/KJEC_Nominations2020/AllItems.aspx

Deadline to submit your nominees is on Dec. 31. Voting will be put out on Jan. 6 and announce them on Jan RSD.

Here are the board positions:

President (coordinates meetings/fundraisers for the year)

Vice President (supports and fills in for president)

Secretary (schedules meetings and venues)

Ways and Means (develops fundraisers, one per quarter)

Treasurer- position filled!!(min. two yrs—handles KJEC money and audits annually, also retrieves plaques for Airman of the Quarter)

AIR FORCE JROTC UNIFORM DRIVE

The wing is hosting another Airman Battle Uniform Clothing Drive (serviceable) to help out the JROTC at West High School and South High School. The last ABU clothing drive that took place over the summer was extremely successful. They are looking for the following serviceable items:

- ABU blouses (JROTC cadets will remove name tags if you don't want to)
- ABU pants
- Sage Boots (please tie laces together so boots don't get mixed up)
- Belt
- Hat
- ABU Goretex jacket

This will run through Jan. 28 to cover two drill periods.

Collection point will be Hangar 12 in the HC-130 Tug Bay between the Metal Technology Shop and the offices.

POC: SMSgt Andrukiewics, C: 907-590-7435, thomas.andrukiewics.1@us.af.mil

GUARD BABIES WELCOMED WITH BUNDLES OF BOOKS AND BLANKETS

Air National Guard dependent infants have been receiving gifts through the Bundles project.

Key spouse volunteers, Kendra Gladwell and Karen Jenkins, started the initiative, which provides every new baby of an Alaska Air National Guard member with a tote bag filled with baby books and a hand-crochet blanket. Karen, an educator at Hiland Mountain Correctional Center, has coordinated the volunteer efforts of several incarcerated women who want to give back to their communities by crocheting blankets and sewing tote bags.

The program was first orchestrated for 176th Logistics Readiness Squadron; however, it is now serving the entire 176th Wing.

The popularity of the program has meant more materials are needed and the Bundles Project has renewed their request for donated yarn and new baby board books.

To give donations or to assist with this project, please contact Master Sgt. Melissa Erhard at 552-6135, or at melissa.erhard.1@us.af.mil.

ONGOING FREE COUNSELING SERVICES

Military Family Life Counselors (MFLC) provide short term non-medical solution-focused counseling to support military families with the challenges of deployments, reintegration, parenting, relationship issues, conflict resolution, anger management and other life issues. They provide free, confidential services on and off military installations, flexible service delivery in non-traditional settings and times. With the exception of child abuse, domestic violence, mandatory reporting, and duty to warn situations, services are confidential.

In response to COVID-19, MFLCs are providing services via secure, encrypted video teleconference.

For more information and to schedule an appointment, call Husch Hathorne-Cantil at 907-382-1407. Appointments are available within 24-48 hours.

SERVICES / ANNOUNCEMENTS

176TH COMPTROLLER FLIGHT ANNOUNCEMENTS

Continue using the CPTF organizational email box- 176cptf.finance@us.af.mil or phone line 907-551-0129

For Technicians

Please certify timecards NLT EOD Thursdays of pay period close week

*** For DSG***

- Accrued Leave on Long Tours: Seeing a spike in leave carryovers and consecutive (tour-tour-tour) leave carryovers
- Carryovers in general should be exception, not the rule – Ref: ANG Leave Carryover Policy August 2014
- Commanders must make every attempt to allow for leave to be taken on order the leave is earned

- Leave carryovers can be lengthy to process (30+ days) if consecutive carryovers are attempted
- DSGs on orders from 31-365 days CAN sell their leave without affecting 60-day career cap

FOR ALL AIRMAN

- Significant change to BAH entitlement rules (changed as of Oct. 29) – Members on consecutive orders that exceed 30 days (31 days or more) are entitled to BAH based on their Home of Record
 - Effective date of entitlement is based on approved/certified order dates
 - Members should notify finance, email preferred, if they have this situation occur
- Wing has not met Government Travel Card overdue metrics since June 2020.
 - Impacts:
 - TDY limitations: Cards being shutdown/unusable after going delinquent (60+ days past due)
 - Cardholders being charged reactivation/late fees
 - Wing losing over \$150k in annual rebates for Quality of Life funding
 - Fixes:
 - Members & Approving Officials - Double check amount actually being paid/split disbursed to card is correct
 - Check for unplanned/new charges may appear on GTC
 - Amendments in DTS/supplemental payments may be necessary
 - Cardholder is liable for any unpaid balance on GTC – See Statement of Understanding (SoU)
 - Refer to unit Agency Program Coordinator or Comptroller Flight for any further questions or issues

FEDERAL TUITION ASSISTANCE OPEN FOR DRILL-STATUS GUARDSMAN

Information for federal tuition assistance has been posted to the 176 FSF FSDE SharePoint.

Requests must be submitted via AFVEC no sooner than 45 days and no later than 15 days prior to course start date. Request must be approved by a supervisor.

It is recommended that requests be forwarded to full-time superintendents by members who are subordinate to drill-status Guardsmen, this should prevent delay of approval.

Airmen are eligible for up to \$3,750 per fiscal year, not to exceed \$250 per semester hour and \$166.66 per quarter hour.

Eligibility Requirements:

- a. Actively participating for pay and points
- b. Members who have a current UFI, Failed Physical Fitness test and/or have a current referral EPR or OPR are ineligible for Federal TA. There are no waivers.
- c. Commissioned officers must have a mandatory separation date of not less than 48 months of service commitment starting at the end of the last class completed. In addition, officers incur a four-year commitment for each course completed using Federal TA.

176 FSF FSDE SharePoint Federal Tuition Assistance Info Folder:

https://cs2.eis.af.mil/sites/12468/176%20MSG/176_FSF/FSDE/layouts/15/start.aspx#/SitePages/Tuition_Assistance.aspx?RootFolder=%2Fsites%2F12468%2F176%20MSG%2F176%5FFSF%2FFSDE%2FTuition%20Assistance%2FFederal%20Tuition%20Assistance%20%2D%20Drill%20Status%2

University of Alaska Tuition Assistance applications may be submitted Nov. 1 to Dec. 28.

Funding is limited, based on State budget and date of application submission.

Airman are eligible for 100 percent tuition cost (12 undergraduate credits/9 graduate credits).

Application request must be approved by commander.

Please direct any questions regarding tuition assistance to 176wg.training@us.af.mil.

MILITARY ONESOURCE RESOURCES

Did you know that Military OneSource is bigger than a 24/7/365 toll free number? The program offers more than just free non-medical counseling. It also provides assistance for the deployment readiness cycle. Military OneSource is a Department of Defense funded program that aids eligible service and family members with building resiliency; both within the military culture and on the homefront. To help strengthen one's resiliency skillset, Military OneSource offers many activities that you and your family members can partake in. For example:

MWR Digital Library:

- Ancestry.com Library Edition - unlock the story of your family using more than 8,000 resources.
- Consumer Reports – are you looking to make a purchase? Use this online library to access 1,000+ ratings, reviews, expert buying advice, product comparisons, consumer user reviews and product video clips.
- EBSCO Audiobooks - more than 2,000 audiobooks in different subjects and categories available for free download.
- Mango Languages - check out this digital language learning program for learners of all levels, with courses in more than 70 different foreign languages, 21 English language courses, and 44 specialty courses.
- Morningstar Investment Research Center - find information and advice on mutual funds, stocks, exchange-traded funds, and market returns. Track investments, access daily market news and commentary, view snapshots on investments, and interact on the research center forums.
- PressReader Digital Newspapers - unlimited digital access to more than 7,000 newspapers from 120 countries in more than 60 different languages. These newspapers are provided in full-color, full-page format, and appear on your screen exactly as they appear on the news stand, many providing instant translation and audio.
- Stingray Qello Concerts - enjoy more than 1700 live moments in music history with the world's largest collection of full-length concerts and music documentaries streamed on-demand to just about any digital device. From the 1920s to today's hottest artists, Qello Concerts spans more than 30 genres, from classical to rock, reggae to country.
- Small Business Builder - helps patrons interested in planning and optimizing their businesses or nonprofits. Built for aspiring entrepreneurs and those with existing small businesses, it provides a step-by-step process supported by a rich variety of recognized tools that enable users to produce complete business plans and other documents essential for gaining access to capital and growing their enterprise.
- Universal Class - over 500 online courses to aid with personal and professional interests: including FREE CEUs, plus online books, movies and music for all ages. Over 40 different references to use.

- Weiss Financial Ratings - Enjoy access to financial literacy tools on retirement planning, home and mortgage, insurance strategies, and saving for your child's education.
- Chill Drills: An overview of four simple drills to help reverse the symptoms of stress. These drills can help slow your heart rate, lower your blood pressure and reduce the level of stress hormones in your body. By doing these drills regularly, you can lower your baseline stress level and be better prepared to deal with stress in the future. Order yours online (free shipping) or download to your smartphone.
- MilTax - free tax services, which provides easy-to-use software that is designed specifically for the military community and is available mid-January through mid-October. MilTax also offers free consultations with experts trained to help military members and their families take command of their taxes.

Many other resources are located online with just a click of the mouse or online chat with a trained consultant to provide more guidance with your ideal topic. See: www.militaryonesource.mil

AIRMAN SAFETY APP

If there was a way to anonymously and quickly make safety reports on your phone, would you use it? There's an app for that. The Aviation Safety Action Program (ASAP) a voluntary, identity-protected means of reporting safety issues that increase the risk to Aviation, Occupational, or Weapons Safety. The goal of the program is to prevent future mishaps and strengthen a culture of safe, effective mission accomplishment. The two ways to submit an ASAP report are on the website (<https://asap.safety.af.mil>) or the smartphone app "Airmen Safety App." Contact: your friendly safety office (551-7604, 176wg.se.176wg@us.af.mil)

UPCOMING AWS DAYS

The 176th Wing is essentially shut down for business on the upcoming Alternate Work Schedule days. RDs (rescheduled drills) and AT days should not be scheduled for these times. The full AWS calendar can be found on the new Wing SharePoint in the Resource Library.

December: 11, 24

January: 15, 29

February: 12, 26

CALABRO SUCCEEDS RADFORD AS 176TH OPERATIONS GROUP COMMANDER

By Staff Sgt. Daniel Robles
176th Wing Public Affairs

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska — Alaska Air National Guard Col. Matthew Calabro succeeded Col. Kenneth Radford as the 176th Operations Group commander during a ceremony here, Nov. 8.

The group provides wartime and peacetime mission support of deployment operations, combat search and rescue, air control, rescue coordination, and strategic airlift for the 176th Wing.

During the ceremony, Radford was presented with the Legion of Merit. The award citation highlighted the 176th OG's efforts under his command. Under Radford's leadership, the group saved 159 lives during rescue missions, deployed dozens of Airmen to Iraq, Africa, and other nations, and provided strategic airlift assistance after hurricanes Irma, Harvey, and Florence.

Radford lauded the group's Airmen for their hard work and camaraderie.

"Having the opportunity to serve as the operations group commander has been the greatest honor of my professional life," he said. "The members of this group really embraced esprit de corps. Thank you for innovating, taking care of each other, and for making this a place I looked forward to working at every day."

Radford will assume duties as the 176th Wing vice commander, a position most recently held by Calabro.

Calabro thanked his past coworkers and discussed the important steps forward for the group.

"Leaders at all levels must train to make quality decisions at the speed necessary for competition," he said. "To the men and women of the 176th Operations Group, thank you for your sacrifice and your ability to make the impossible possible. When the rest of the DoD ventures north, they will look to us for guidance."

RETIRED 176TH WING PJ, FIREFIGHTER PARTNERS WITH GUARDIAN ANGELS FOR RESCUE

By David Bedard
176th Wing Public Affairs

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska — Few would know from looking at retired Alaska Air National Guard Senior Master Sgt. Michael Wayt that he served 21 years on active duty between the regular Air Force and the Alaska Air National Guard before putting in 18 years and counting with the Anchorage Fire Department.

Now a firefighter with the AFD's Station 9C on the southern outskirts of the city, Wayt looks more like a world class marathoner or an American Ninja contestant than he does a retiree following a second career.

Service members looking to retire often joke about becoming a door greeter at a department store, but Wayt said he wanted to put his skills — honed through decades of rescue operations under challenging weather conditions in rough terrain — to good use.

Even though he was off shift at the time, his experience would be needed Aug. 15 following the successful AFD rescue of four out-of-state hikers near Beluga Point, a hiking locale south of Anchorage on the Seward Highway.

His know-how wasn't called upon to rescue the hikers but to come to the aid of a member of the AFD Front Country Rope Rescue Team who was injured during the rescue operation. The effort would see his two careers, past and present, collide during a pitched collaboration of AFD and Air National Guard professionals dedicated to the rescue mission.

Aim high

The son of a retired chief master sergeant, Wayt was an Air Force family member who moved around a lot, finding himself at Travis Air Force Base, California, during his senior year in high school. With two older brothers who were already in the Air Force, the firefighter said his path was obvious.

"It was my turn to decide what I wanted to do," Wayt recalled. "So the Air Force was sort of our thing in my family. I didn't really know any other way."

Signing a Delayed-Entry Program enlistment for what he described as a "guaranteed desk job" as a dental laboratory technician, Wayt had nine months to consider his options while he waited to ship out to Basic Military Training and technical school.

"Somewhere in there, I really took to the outdoors," he said. "I was working in the Young Adult Conservation Corps in California, and I really liked working outside, being adventurous."

Suddenly, a job that didn't involve lots of time in the wilderness didn't seem as appealing. Fortunately for the budding Airman, he would get a shot at a career field that was more to his liking.

"When I got to basic training, I was doing my thing, and someone shows up in jungle fatigues and asks, 'Who wants to try out for Survival?' and I raised my hand," he said.

Today, Survival has transformed into the Survival, Evasion, Resistance, and Escape career field, and is an integral part of the Guardian Angel system that also includes combat rescue officers and pararescuemen (PJs).

While he was a pararescue survival instructor, he was asked to go through pararescue medical training, and he agreed. After he completed the medical portion, he was asked to complete the "pipeline," the many months of training in order to become a PJ.

Despite having all of the necessary qualifications after successfully completing the rigorous pipeline, Wayt said he didn't cross over to pararescue because the career field was overmanned at the time.

As it turned out, Wayt would later get an opportunity to change career fields as well as scenery.

The Last Frontier

Alaska can be as unforgiving as it is breathtaking. A map the size of a dinner table hanging in the Alaska Rescue Coordination Center — the nerve center for statewide rescue operations involving the 176th Wing and other agencies — is riddled with pins across the state denoting hundreds of rescues throughout the years involving everything from stranded hunters to crashed aircraft.

Despite being less than 10 miles from Alaska's largest city and hundreds of yards away from the highway, a father and his three grown sons found themselves in a precarious situation while hiking near Beluga Point Aug. 15.

Wayt said the ascent was easy enough as they followed the marked trail. On the way back, they decided to use a different route down a gulley. That decision would turn a pleasant hike into a phone call to the authorities.

"It got more and more technical for them, and they got to the point where at least one of them felt really shaky," he said. "They sat down where they were at and called 911 to get out of there."

With an increasing slope angle coupled with sections of loose rocks, the descent would require equipment the group didn't have.

"Anyone experienced with rope rescues knows most aren't five-minute rescues," Wayt said. "There's a lot of setting up, and there are a lot of things you have to keep in mind with hazards."

When members of AFD Front Country Rope Rescue Team — specially selected and trained for high-angle mountain and trail rescues — showed up, they knew they would have to manually lower the family by rope. What they needed was an anchor.

An anchor is what Wayt said he found when his father was stationed at Eielson Air Force Base, nestled in the frigid, golden heart of Alaska's interior. From that time on, Wayt said the allure of Alaska was hardwired to his brain.

"I always compared everything to Alaska," he said. "Nothing was ever quite the same."

As it happened, his eventual move to Alaska later in life would bring him fully into his career as a PJ as well as into the sourdough fold of the state's residents.

He would be part of a vanguard of regular Air Force Airmen transitioning to full-time Guardsmen as the active duty 71st Rescue Squadron transformed into the Alaska Air National Guard's 210th Rescue Squadron — an organization that would later split into the 210th, 211th, and 212th Rescue Squadrons.

Very quickly, Wayt said he developed an appreciation for the group of professionals composing the rescue triad of Guardian Angels, HH-60G Pave Hawk crews and HC-130 King crews, as well as all of the maintainers and support personnel who keep the units ready to reach remote parts of the state when someone needs rescue.

"By deploying to other places, you start realizing how good our Guard pilots are up here," he explained. "There was no sense of hotdogging it and taking risks you didn't need to take. But if there was something where there was a lot of gain by taking the risk to save somebody if they were really hanging it out, you took that risk."

Rescuing the rescuer

Finding an anchor that would provide the literal lifeline to the four stranded hikers

proved elusive at first. Ideally, Wayt said, they would want a well-planted stone anchor along the fall line — the route leading directly down the gully. Unfortunately, no such anchor existed.

What the firefighters found was a stand of aspen trees off to the side. Though not ideal, the team determined it would do, and they installed the two-rope system that would serve as a makeshift mountain elevator.

The 300-foot rope was long enough to get the hikers low enough to where they could descend the remainder of the 450-foot gully.

During the rescue, a member of the team noticed a large rock was unstable, threatening the rescue team and the hikers. Trying his best to prevent its fall and realizing dislodgment was impossible to stop, the firefighter gave a shout of warning, and the rock gave way crushing his foot and leg in the process.

Though the team had ably and successfully extracted the four hikers, the hazards of the job and the willingness to sacrifice self to protect others meant the rescuers needed an expedited extraction of their injured colleague.

Wayt was called in to plus up the team and offer his experience. By the time he showed up, the 210th RQS helicopter was on its way, and the team paramedic had assessed and treated the injured firefighter.

Wayt coordinated with the RCC to ensure they would have radio communications with the HH-60. As it turned out, visual cues were all that were necessary once the whirlybird glided overhead.

"There was a real comfortable feeling when I saw that 210th Pave Hawk orbiting, doing their thing," he recalled. "It was like I was back there with an excited but controlled, familiar, comforting type of feeling."

Wayt said he decided to separate from the military after 21 years despite the opportunity to continue because he wanted to have enough time to start another career, joining the AFD in 2002.

Though he would require additional training to become a full-fledged firefighter, Wayt said his PJ background has served him well, granting him many of the skills necessary to become an integral part of the Front Country Rope Rescue Team.

Because the injured firefighter was on a steep portion of the slope, the operation would require use of the helicopter's hoist to insert the pararescue team and to extract the hurt firefighter.

On the team was Alaska Air National Guard Staff Sgt. Daniel Stikeleather, 212th RQS PJ, and another PJ from out of state.

Stikeleather said the mission was pretty straightforward as rescues go. Wayt passed along to him information concerning treatment the firefighter had received so far, and the PJs packaged him up for hoist before the team moved him to a city hospital where he was released to civilian medical personnel for further treatment.

The helicopter operation went off without a hitch, Wayt said, owing to the abiding partnership that exists between first responders and the statewide rescue community.

"For the most part, we don't see the egos, since most of these are government-type agencies, whether it's the city government or the federal government with the folks at the 176th," he said. "It's good to know people representing all of these agencies like doing rescue work, and they always step up."

ALASKA AIR GUARDSMAN ADVOCATES FOR MILITARY, STEM CAREERS FOR WOMEN IN PAGEANT WIN

By David Bedard

176th Wing Public Affairs

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska — For many Americans, getting behind the wheel for a first solo drive is a rite of passage that comes with a sense of exuberance at opening the doorway to automotive freedom.

That first zip down a bustling freeway without mom or dad scrutinizing every lane change can also come with jangled nerves at the idea of the training wheels finally coming off for good.

For Alaska Air National Guard Staff Sgt. Elizabeth McJannet-Bratton, noncommissioned officer in charge of Inbound Cargo, 176th Logistics Readiness Squadron, that rite of passage didn't come first behind the wheel of a Buick sedan or a Honda SUV, but behind the yoke of a Cessna 172.

After performing a few touch and goes at Augusta State Airport, Maine, with her pilot instructor looking over her shoulder, he told her to pull over after taxiing. Without warning or pretense, he told her it was time to drop the training wheels and fly solo.

Dumbstruck, McJannet-Bratton said she collected herself and talked her way through the checklist of procedures. After a few minutes of defying gravity without another human being within earshot, the then 16-year-old safely touched down, successfully realizing a childhood dream of taking flight on her own terms.

Another ambition the Air Guardsman recently realized was winning a statewide pageant, earning laurels as Miss Alaska Collegiate 2021 during an Oct. 24 competition in Palmer.

McJannet-Bratton's platform of "Combat Boots to High Heels" underscored her lifelong conviction that women can pursue careers in defense and in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, without sacrificing a sense of femininity.

"The platform is about inspiring young women with the knowledge you can be in the military or a STEM career field, and also be confident in yourself while being as girly as you want to be," she said. "Those aren't mutually exclusive things."

The manifold path to capturing the Miss Alaska Collegiate sash began in Sydney, Australia, where McJannet-Bratton was born to an Australian mother, Michelle, and an American father, David. Her parents met in Anchorage, a city the Airman calls home, during a walkabout sojourn for both that had them crossing paths in the Last Frontier.

The family moved to the United States when McJannet-Bratton was 2, settling in Erie, Colorado, where she grew up. David, a commercial pilot and aerospace engineer, worked on designing the Atlas V space rocket, inspiring his daughter to seek for herself a life of wings and rocket boosters.

"I basically grew up on Star Trek," she said.

A Girl Scout who lettered in choir and track and field, McJannet-Bratton's aeronautic pursuits led the 16-year-old to the Civil Air Patrol and an encampment that would further cement her interest in aircraft and the military.

During a subsequent summer camp at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, McJannet-Bratton said she developed a yen for the state on the edge of the Arctic.

"I came to Alaska expecting igloos and tundra, and was like, 'Wow, it's gorgeous up here,'" she recalled.

When she managed to snag a \$79 one-way ticket to Anchorage, the Coloradan decided to take a leap of faith. If it didn't work out, she could write it off as an extended vacation. But if she could find success, she thought she could make a new home.

She landed a job as a nanny and, after a month in the state, joined the Alaska Air National Guard's 176th Wing as an air transportation specialist with 176th LRS. A year-and-a-half later, she landed a full-time technician job with the unit and later reclassified to traffic management.

During her transition from a tenderfoot cheechako to a veteran sourdough Alaskan, McJannet-Bratton earned a Bachelor of Science in Aviation Technology from the University of Alaska Anchorage, and is pursuing a Master of Science in Global Supply Chain Management.

She never forgot her roots in the Civil Air Patrol.

Fail until you succeed

The daughter of an actual, no-kidding, certified rocket scientist, perhaps it was fate that rocketry is a big part of the Civil Air Patrol cadet curriculum.

McJannet-Bratton said cadets start with simple foam rockets before graduating to more advanced model rockets. Finally, students have to successfully deliver an egg, or an "astronaut," into high altitude and deliver the passenger back safely to terra firma.

On her first attempt as a cadet, the junior rocket scientist's boosted vehicle suffered a failed parachute, burning in at a rate that unfortunately delivered an egg suitable only for an omelet.

With a better-prepared body tube, McJannet-Bratton's rocket glided back to earth, but insufficient packaging doomed astronaut Humpty Dumpty.

Finally, on her third try, the cadet managed to deliver an intact egg. Trial and error coupled with a studied analysis finally made for a successful outcome.

McJannet-Bratton attended her first pageant as a spectator in 2016, catching a bug that would lead to a lot of failure before hard work and study would lead to success.

"My impression of pageants was some women who don't know a lot in pretty dresses walking across the stage," she said. "After I did some research, I learned how the competitors have different platforms based on a belief of how to help the community. Most are highly educated."

Competing in her first pageant in 2017, McJannet-Bratton failed to garner the top sash, but she got a first-hand glimpse of what is required to be competitive. Five days later, she was on a plane bound for Puerto Rico, recently devastated by Hurricane Maria, where she would work at an air traffic hub bringing in relief supplies.

Among those supplies was mail, which had been backed up for a month. The Airman said she was emotionally overwhelmed by a tidal wave of boxes with words of encouragement like "You got this" and "Stay Strong" scrawled on the outside.

"We worked all night getting all the cargo off, and it was all the stuff people were sending their families," she recalled. "It was already a very humbling and impactful mission overall, but it was good to see that side of people helping each other. I am grateful to see that side of humanity."

Living out her platform of Combat Boots to High Heels in reverse, McJannet-Bratton continued to refine the skills necessary to successfully compete. Through three more pageants, she learned to ace the backstage interview but would fall short in other areas of the competition. She was honing in on piecing all of it together for her eventual win.

Through it all was her continued service to the Civil Air Patrol as adult cadre, serving as the Alaska Wing director of Cadet Programs. She is responsible for working with cadet staff to plan and execute large-scale activities like the annual encampment that originally inspired her to serve.

Houston, we have touchdown

In 2016, U.S. Army Reserve Capt. Deshauna Barber was crowned Miss USA. In interviews following her achievement, she talked about her upbringing by two career Soldiers as well as reconciling her "girly girl side" with her interests in the military, business management and information technology. As an inspired McJannet-Bratton knew all along, there need not be a conflict between the interests.

As far as the pageant interviews went, she said they reminded her of military boards. The poise and confidence she leaned on in one dimension was equally as helpful in the other.

The Airman said the platform that she would stick with throughout her pageant career, the platform that would ultimately propel her to be crowned Miss Alaska Collegiate arose out of a conversation she had with her sister's friends growing up.

One friend expressed interest in being a biologist. Another replied that science was no profession for aspiring young women.

"I don't want to do that, that's for nerds, not pretty girls," McJannet-Bratton recalled one of the friends saying during the conversation.

"No!" the Airman exclaimed. "You can do both of them. Do whatever you want and don't let some outside perception change what you want to do."

ALASKA NATIONAL GUARD RESCUES TWO HIKERS NEAR COOPER LANDING

By David Bedard
176th Wing Public Affairs

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska — Alaska Air National Guardsmen of the 176th Wing rescued two distressed hikers Nov. 29 near Cooper Landing about 60 miles south of Anchorage.

Alaska Air National Guard Capt. Joshua Lester, an Alaska Rescue Coordination Center controller and a pilot in the 210th Rescue Squadron, said the hikers used a satellite communication device to contact the Alaska State Troopers, who then contacted the AKRCC.

The AKRCC requested assistance from the 176th Wing, who dispatched a 210th Rescue Squadron HH-60G Pave Hawk search and rescue helicopter and 212th Rescue Squadron Guardian Angel (GA) team comprising a combat rescue officer and a pararescueman. GA teams are highly trained SAR specialists with arctic expertise.

Due to high trees and chest-deep snow, the Pave Hawk crew deployed the GAs using a rescue hoist and lowered them to an area about 100 yards away from the hikers. The team moved to the hikers and assessed them before hoisting them into the Pave Hawk.

The hikers were transported to Providence Alaska Medical Center in Anchorage and released.

Lester commended the hikers for carrying a satellite communication device and said hunters and hikers should always be prepared for bad weather and challenging terrain.

"Cell phone coverage is spotty at best in Alaska's rural areas, so it's critical to be able to reach help with a satellite device," he said. "Also, it's important to go in parties of at least two as these hikers did to ensure someone can get help if the other is incapacitated."

For this rescue, 210th RQS, 212th RQS and AKRCC were awarded two saves.

RSD SCHEDULE

MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR REGULARLY SCHEDULED DRILL WEEKENDS

January: 23 & 24
February: 20 & 21
March: 20 & 21

RSD SHUTTLE SCHEDULE

RSD ROTATOR PROCESS

Members sign up directly via Facebook, as well as check flight updates. Rotator riders can request access to the Facebook group by searching "AKANG RSD Rotator" and requesting membership.

Friday Pick-up		
South UTA Shuttle		
Location	Arrive	Depart
Elmendorf	CANCELLED	1715
Kodiak	1815	1830
Homer	1910	1920
Kenai	1935	1945
Elmendorf	2000	
	CANCELLED	
North UTA Shuttle		
Location	Arrive	Depart
Elmendorf		1900
Eielson	2000	2015
Elmendorf	2100	
Sunday Return		
South UTA Shuttle		
Location	Arrive	Depart
Elmendorf	CANCELLED	1715
Kenai	1800	1810
Homer	1825	1835
Kodiak	1915	1925
Elmendorf	2030	
North UTA Shuttle		
Location	Arrive	Depart
Eielson		1700
Elmendorf	1800	1815
Eielson	1915	

Log Plans will post events for each flight a week prior to departure. New riders fill out a new rider request form (LGRDX Share Point under the RSD Rotator folder) and send to the Log Plans shop (176WG.LGRR@us.af.mil) to be filed. Logistics Plans office cell: 947-4395

PLEASE NOTE: the SOUTH UTA SHUTTLE has been CANCELLED until further notice. The North

UTA Shuttle will still be scheduled on a monthly basis.

JBER show time is two hours prior to take off at the passenger terminal.

176OSS CURRENT OPS Number: 551-5208

JBER ATOC: 552-2104 (Call to update gates)

EDF PAX TERM: Fax 552-3996 / Office 552-3781 (Call to update gates)

Eielson show time is three hours prior to take off at the passenger terminal

EIL PAX TERM: Fax 377-2287 / Office 377-1250

RSD Rotator Share Point:

<https://jber.eis.pacaf.af.mil/176WG/176MSG/176LRS/LGRD%20Log%20Plans/For>

<ms/AllItems.aspx?RootFolder=%2F176WG%2F176MSG%2F176LRS%2F176GRD%20Log%20Plans%2FUTA%20Rotator&FolderCTID=0x01200074092A9858D1664D86D7BCF8C1287C0A&View=%7BC246B693%2DEB0F%2D4968%2DAEF8%2DD89451AEDCAA%7D>

WEEKEND DINING FACILITY HOURS

The Iditarod (Elmendorf) Dining Facility will be closed on Saturday August 1, as renovations are to be completed.

On Saturday members will be encouraged to have lunch at the Wilderness in (Bldg. 647 Ft Richardson).

The Wilderness Inn serves "brunch" from 1000-1400 on the weekend.

The Army DFAC will honor the provided ESM roster and not charge DSGs for their meal.

If anyone gets turned away on the Army side please contact MSgt Franz Deters 907-903-5545

If AGRs or officers wish to eat on the Army side, a flat rate of \$5.65 will apply.

On Sunday the Iditarod will be open again for business (normal hours).

There will not be POD support for the flight line over the weekend (located near F-22 hangers)

Normal Hours:

BREAKFAST: 0630-0830

GRAB-N-GO: 0900-1030

LUNCH: 1030-1330

GRAB-N-GO: 1330-1630

DINNER: 1630-1830

MIDNIGHT: 2300-0100

GATE HOURS

For latest gate hours, visit <https://www.jber.jb.mil/Units/673abw/673SFS/>

POINTS OF INTEREST

176th Wing

Website: <http://www.176wg.ang.af.mil/>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/176thWing>

Instagram: <http://www.instagram.com/176thwing>

Flickr: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/176wg/>

DVIDs: <https://www.dvidshub.net/unit/176WPA>

SharePoint (requires CAC):

<https://cs2.eis.af.mil/sites/12468/Pages/176%20Wing.aspx>

Alaska National Guard

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/AKNationalGuard>

Instagram: <http://www.instagram.com/alaskanationalguard>

Flickr: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/alaskanationalguard>

Youtube: <http://www.youtube.com/user/NationalGuardAlaska>

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/AKNationalGuard>

JB ER

Website: <http://www.jber.jb.mil/>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/JBERAK>

Newspaper: <http://www.dvidshub.net/publication/397/arctic-warrior>

Fulltime Job Opportunities:

<http://dmva.alaska.gov/employment.htm>

HRO – Alaska National Guard:

<http://dmva.alaska.gov/HRO>

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<http://www.176wg.ang.af.mil/units/wingstaff/pa/eguardian.asp>

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